



1600 9th Street, Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 654-0471

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APO MEMO NO: #01-03

TO: COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH DIRECTORS

FROM: JIM HIGGINS, Ed.D., Chief,
RESEARCH AND PERFORMANCE OUTCOME DEVELOPMENT

SUBJECT: ADULT PERFORMANCE OUTCOME SYSTEM INSTRUMENT
TRANSLATIONS AVAILABLE

The California Department of Mental Health (DMH) Research and Performance Outcome Development Unit (RPOD) would like to inform counties that several non-English translations are now available for the two public domain Adult Performance Outcome System instruments: the MHSIP Consumer Survey (MHSIP) and the California Quality of Life (CAQOL). These instruments are available in the following languages: Spanish, Chinese (traditional), Korean, Tagalog, Vietnamese, and Cambodian. RPOD has also designed a generic answer sheet for the MHSIP and CAQOL. Please note: Lehman's Quality of Life Short Form (QL-SF) was also translated into the languages listed above. However, due to copyright issues, RPOD cannot format or distribute the QL-SF translations. We have made these translations available to the instrument's author, to be distributed at his discretion. Send written inquiries to:

Dr. Anthony Lehman
University of Maryland
Department of Psychiatry
701 West Pratt Street, Room 388
Baltimore, MD 21201

Development of Translations

A professional translation company developed the translations with California's mental health population in mind. (Note: The Spanish CAQOL and MHSIP were developed by the California State University, Stanislaus, under the direct supervision of Stanislaus County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services.) The translation company was given the following protocol:

- One or more Translator(s) (preferably more) will be selected for each language.
- One or more of the Translators for each of these non-English languages will



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independently develop a forward translation (from English to the non-English version) of each of the instruments. The(se) Translators will try out their translation(s) with monolingual reviewers for clarity in the translated language. Using this information, the translations should be edited/modified into a final translated version.

- Another (different) Translator(s) will then, independently do a translation back into English. This back translation will be reviewed for comparability with the original English version.

Los Angeles, Riverside, Sacramento, San Francisco, Santa Clara, and Stanislaus counties assisted DMH by field-testing the translations. Although we have made every effort to ensure that the translations are accurate, appropriate, and free of errors, we view these translations as a “work-in-progress” for the first year of use. As we obtain more feedback over the coming year and analyze the data that are collected with these translations, we will refine them as needed.

Discontinue Use of Any Other Non-English Translations

Now that these non-English translations are available in the six languages mentioned above, counties should immediately discontinue use of any other translations they are using in these languages. In addition, DMH would like to remind counties that if an instrument is not available in a language requested by the client and an interpreter is used to translate the instrument, these data should NOT be sent to DMH. This method could compromise the data. Only data collected from the instruments released by DMH for performance outcomes should be transmitted to DMH.

In the past, DMH has not closely monitored the language field required by the adult data dictionary. This field asks for the specific language of the instrument the client used. Until now, the instruments were only officially available in English. Now that many non-English translations of the instruments are available, DMH will begin looking more closely at the language of the instrument when analyzing the data collected. Therefore, counties must indicate the language of the instrument for every record submitted to DMH.

Recommendations for Administration

The following are recommendations for administering the various non-English translations of the instruments to clients:

- 1. All translations are administered to clients with the help of an interpreter or bilingual staff member.** In our efforts to simplify data collection for the various translations, RPOD has developed a generic answer sheet for the MHSIP and CAQOL instruments. This answer sheet is in English in the event that English-speaking staff need to hand-enter client responses.

During the trial test of the translations, it was determined that requiring clients to transfer their responses to an answer sheet is often too difficult. To help ensure accurate data collection and to ease demands made on clients, DMH recommends that all translations are administered to clients with the help of an interpreter/bilingual staff member. This person can also transfer the client's responses to the questions on the answer sheet as it is read to the client.

- 2. If an interpreter or bilingual staff member assists the client, give the client a copy of the translated instrument so that he/she may follow along as the instrument is read.** During the trial test of the instruments, it was found that reading the translation to the client is most helpful if the client is able to follow along and see the answer choices that are available. (Many of the answer choices are too long for clients to remember if they cannot see the answer choices that are available.)
- 3. In the event that an interpreter/bilingual staff member is unavailable or the client refuses such assistance, please ask the client to circle his/her responses directly on the translated document. (Do not give the client the answer sheet unless the client is able to complete the form unassisted.)**
Clients may not have the ability to accurately transfer their responses to a separate answer sheet, especially since the answer sheet is in English. Therefore, DMH does not recommend counties distribute the answer sheet directly to clients unless they are provided assistance.

Feedback

As already stated, RPOD views this first year of use as a large-scale trial test of the translations with adult clients who participate in the statewide adult performance outcome system. Soon, we hope to provide a web-based comment form to give county staff the opportunity to provide feedback to DMH. These comments are intended to alert RPOD to any issues that may help us in analyzing the data collected from the translated instruments. If you have not already done so, please subscribe to the RPOD website at: <http://www.dmh.ca.gov/rpod>. This will allow you to receive automatic email messages when new information is added to our public site. RPOD will announce the availability of this comment form to those on our subscription list.

Downloading Translations

Please visit the DMH Performance Outcome public web site at: <http://www.dmh.ca.gov/RPOD/adult.htm> to download the translated instruments. For technical assistance with downloading these files, call the DMH "Help Desk" at (916) 654-3117. If you do not have access to the internet, you may call Rachel Luxemburg, Technical Support to the Adult Performance Outcome System, at

rluxembe@dmhhq.state.ca.us or (916) 654-0984 and request hard copies of the translations.

Future Projects

The next priority for the Adult Performance Outcome System instrument translations are: Armenian, Farsi, Hmong, and Russian. These are the remaining "threshold" languages in California as of January 2000. Counties that would like to participate on the next translation committee should contact Rachel Luxemburg at the email address listed above.

cc Beverly Abbott, California Mental Health Directors Association
Ann Arneill-Py, California Mental Health Planning Council
Rachel Luxemburg, California Department of Mental Health
Karen Purvis, California Department of Mental Health
Loren Rubenstein, California Department of Mental Health